Pūrṇavāda - A new *Vedānta* school: A detailed study

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Table of Contents

Introduction **3**

Vedānta Schools of thought 3

Introduction of Dr. R. P. Parnerkar 4

Pūrṇavāda Philosophy 5

Review of Literature **6**

Need of the Present Study 7

Hypothesis **8**

Objectives **8**

Scope and Limitations 8

Methodology **9**

Work Plan 9

References and Bibliography **10**

Introduction: -

'Philosophy starts in the necessity of a Human Being'[1] is what we can observe when we study the development of any philosophical thought. Indian thought has been famous worldwide for being *Mokṣa*-oriented. (Hiriyanna, 1993), at the same time concepts like *Dharma, Svadharma*, and *Puruṣārtha* play an important role in some of the Indian Philosophies. The Indian Philosophies are broadly divided into two types Orthodox (*Āstika*) and Heterodox (*Nāstika*). (Datta, 1948) *Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Pūrvamīmāṃsā, Uttara Mīmāṃsā* (*Vedānta*) are the Orthodox systems, and *Jaina, Buddha, Cārvāka* is the heterodox systems. The locus of this study is *Uttara Mīmāṃsā* i.e., the *Vedānta* school of thought. The recent and contemporary philosophical developments can be considered as of the *Vedānta* school. The new thoughts and theories are yet developing in the school, making it more relevant to the 21st century. One of the recent thoughts in the school is known as *Pūrṇavāda*.

Vedānta Schools of thought: -

The *Vedānta* School is one such school in which scholars of the 21st century are also contributing and establishing new thoughts. The development of thought can be studied as follows,

Advaita Vedānta: The school is the most influential thought propounded by *Adi Shānkaracharya*. The school established *Advait Vedānta* thought that *Brahman* is the ultimate reality and everything else is *Mithyā.* This illusionary power of *Brahman* is known as *Māyā,* which is the cause of this world. There is no difference between the individual soul and *Brahman*. Knowledge of this non-difference (*A-dvaita*) is liberation and thus the path to this is only through knowledge (*jñāna*).

***Vishistadvaita*:** The thought is established by *Ramanujacharya* who says that says that the *jīvātman* (individual soul) is a part *Brahman* and hence is similar, but not identical. The main difference from *Advaita* is that in *Visishtadvaita*, *Brahman* is asserted to have attributes, including individual conscious souls and matter. *Brahman*, matter, and individual souls are distinct but mutually inseparable entities. This school propounds Bhakti, or devotion to God visualized as *Vishnu*, to be the path to liberation. Māyā is seen as the creative power of God.

Dvaita: *Dvaita* school was propounded by *Madhvacharya*. It identifies *Ishwara* with *Brahman* completely, and in turn with *Vishnu* or his incarnation *Krishna*. It regards *Brahman*, all individual souls (*jīvātman*s), and matter as eternal and mutually separate entities. This school also advocated Bhakti as the route to liberation. There is no concept of *Māyā* as an illusionary power behind the world.

[1] Western concept of 'Philosophy starts in wonder' is rejected by Dr. R. P. Parnerkar in his book 'Tondolakh' and there he puts forth the concept as 'Philosophy starts in the necessity of a human being'.

***Dvaitādvaita*:** *Dvaitādvaita* was propounded by *Nimbārkacharya*, based upon an earlier school called *Bhedābheda*, which was taught by *Bhāskaracharya*. According to this school, the *jīvātman* is at once the same and yet different from Brahman. The relationship of the *jiva* with *Brahman* may be regarded as *dvaita* from one point of view and *Advaita* from another. There are three categories of existence, *cit*, *acit*, and *Isvara*. *Isvara* is independent and exists by Himself, while the existence of *cit* and *acit* is dependent upon Him. At the same time, *cit* and *acit* are different from *Isvara*, in the sense that they have attributes (*guna*) and capacities (*swabhaava*), which are different from those of Isvara. The difference means a kind of existence that is separate but dependent, (*para-tantra-satta-bhava*) while non-difference means the impossibility of independent existence (*svatantra-satta-bhava*).

***Shuddhadvaita*:** *Shuddhadvaita* was propounded by Vallabhacharya. This system also encouraged Bhakti as the only means of liberation to go to *Goloka*[2]. The world is said to be the sport (Leela) of *Krishna*, who is *Sat-Chit-Ananda*. According to the version of *Vaishnava* Theology he espoused; the glorious *Krishna* in His "*Satchidananda*" form is the Absolute *Brahman*. He is permanently playing out His sport (*leela*) from His seat in the *Goloka* which is even beyond the divine *Vaikuntha*, the abode of *Vishnu* and Satya-loka, the abode of *Brahman* the Creator, and *Kailas*, the abode of *Shiva*. Creation is His sport.

***Achintya Bhedābheda*:** *Achintya Bhedābheda* was propounded by *Chaitanya Mahaprabhu*. This doctrine of inconceivable one-ness and difference states that the living soul is intrinsically linked with the Supreme Lord, and yet at the same time is not the same as God, the exact nature of this relationship is inconceivable to the human mind. (Contributors, 2021)

Introduction of Dr. R. P. Parnerkar:

He was born on the auspicious day of Vyas Poornima on the 16th of July, 1916 in Amalner. He was born into a typical orthodox family of Brahmins. His father, Pt. Pralhad guru Parnerkar was a renowned Dashagranthi Vaidik of Indore. At a very early age, Ramchandra started his studies of *Veda*. Because of his mother Yamuna Devi, he was also introduced to the Saint and Pauranik Literature. Afterward, He studied Literature, Sociology, Economics, Logic (Western and Eastern) *Nyaya*, *Vedas*, *Upaniṣads*, *Yoga*, Astronomy, Geology, Physics, etc. independently. This study was deep, many-sided, and in conformity with university-patterns and so he could guide many students for graduation, post-graduation, and further research. He also studied Biology, Geology, Astronomy, and Physics and prepared a thesis on cosmogony. He submitted that to Berlin University by 1938-39. His findings

[2] Literary means, the world of cows; the Sankrit word 'go', 'cow'.

therein were so debatable that by the time Hitler declared war it could not be even franked by proper authorities because he had shaken the very bases of many positive sciences. Having failed to get recognition from Germany for his research work he was not disappointed. He already had some doubts regarding *Adi Śaṅkarā's* philosophy, especially regarding his exposition of *Māyā*, devaluation of *Ishwara*, and inadequate quotations from *Vedas*. Side by side he disagreed with *Shri Gaudapadacharya's Ajativada*, opposing these two he established his philosophy of *Pūrṇavāda*. For this research the oldest Indian University viz. Bharat Dharma Mahamandal (Sanskrit and spiritual University) of Varanasi conferred on him the much-coveted distinction, the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. It is enough to state that Pandit Raj Rajeshwar Shastri Dravid of *Varanasi* who is supposed to be the top-most authority on Sanskrit learning was one of his examiners. Dr. Parnerkar knew that all this moving of heaven and earth at a very high intellectual level is of no use to the man in the street. All he needs is the incentive to action coupled with warm emotional backing telling him-"Go ahead and find not in adversity, someone is with you all the time".

***Pūrṇavāda* Philosophy:**

Pūrṇavāda is a Philosophy that emerged around the 1940s to 1950s. The Philosophy puts forth the concept of *Pūrṇapuruṣa* which is attuned to the Vedas as Dr. Parnerker claims. The thesis is divided into 9 chapters, 1. Heart to Heart which includes the reasoning behind writing this thesis, 2nd one is *Poorna Puruśā*, this is the main theory put forth by *Poornawād*, the concept of God. In the 3rd chapter, he talks about the very famous notion of *māyā* and explains how the *Māyā* explained in *Vedās* is different from that of *Shānkaracharyas Māyā*. 4th chapter is about the notion of *Vidyā* and *Avidyā*, the types of *Vidyā*, its relation with *Avidyā,* and its correlation with *Adñyana*. The 5th chapter is about *Para Brahman*, the very notion on which all the Acharyas have put forth their thoughts. All the *Vaiśnava* tradition thought is commented on in this 6th chapter. The concept of *Dnyāna* and *Vidnyāna* is elaborately discussed in the 7th chapter. All the Philosophies revolve around one common concept which is *Mokśa*, which is explained in the 8th chapter. The ultimate output which you'll get after understanding and implementing all this *Poornādvait* according to R. P. Parnerkar which he discusses in his last 9th chapter, the word means complete *Advaita*.

The book starts with the nucleus of the theory i.e., the Concept of *Poornā Puruśa*. *Poornawad* says that mind and matter are two experiences of the same reality which he has styled as *Poornā*. After studying the *Vedas* Dr. Parnerkar concluded that there was a basic mistake made by *Vedantins* while putting forth their treatise. They only considered the *Nirguna* aspect of *Brahman* while *Vedā* slightly varies from this and according to Parnerkar *Vedas* talk about the concept of *Poornā Puruśa.* So, he

puts forth the concept of *Poornā Puruśa* in his treatise using verses from Vedas as well as Saints literature and points out the core mistake of *Advaitins*. Dr. Parnerkar starts his doctrine by putting forth the Concept of *Poornā Puruśa*.

While talking about the application of treatise in life, like the eight tenets of *Buddhism*, Dr. Parnerkar has stressed the necessity of imbibing six aspects of Life as an Art. They are (1) Efficiency, (2) Organization and planning, (3) Rapport, (4) Public opinion, (5) Deep study of the Time element, and (6) Intensive hope with a proper invocation. "In contemporary Indian philosophy, the contribution of Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, and others are important and one can proudly include Dr. Parnerkar as one of the important contemporary Indian philosophers who has reinterpreted the texts to suit the modern man. The *Pūrṇavāda* philosophy can change the life of the individual and society. In the *Pūrṇavāda* philosophy, "nothing exists outside ". Everything is included in it. It does not believe in a mere theoretical understanding of life but gives a practical orientation to life. Man is said to be the combination of both matter and spirit and most of the time, man is immersed in the material side of life, and spirituality is often neglected. Spirituality is that which gives identity to human beings. *Pūrṇavāda's* philosophy takes the human being to the higher plane of life, namely spirituality. This makes *Pūrṇavāda's* philosophy more relevant to the twenty-first century and as a philosophical method, it offers a guiding principle to life." (Parnerkar, 2016)

Review of Literature: -

The literature which is available concerning the topic is not directly related to the subject, there hasn't been any specific academic, rigorous research on the selected topic. So, the literature referred to is either on *Pūrṇavāda* or other specific *Vedāntaic* philosophies. This is a review of related research work:

1. **Dr. R. P. Parnerkar: *Pūrṇavāda*** - The book is a thesis written by Parnerkar, putting forth the *Pūrṇavāda* philosophy along with the refutation of others. It considers *Adi Shānkaracharyas Māyāvada* and *Gaudapadacharyas Ajativada* as pūrvapakṣa of the treatise. The core concepts of the *Pūrṇavāda* philosophy and commentary of the pūrvapakṣa are mentioned in this book.

2. **Prof. V. P. Apte: *Pūrṇavāda Prabodha* Part 1 to 5** – The study of the book will give a distinct and clear picture of the *Pūrṇavāda* philosophy. It is in better words simplified version of the

treatise. It is in 5 parts, each dividing the 9 chapters of the treatise, effort can be observed to make the thought understandable for the common man as well.

3. **Satyanarayan Aboti: *Pūrṇawāda* Philosophy** – The study of the book can give you a brief Introduction to the *Pūrṇavāda* Philosophy along with a Historical review of philosophy, starting from ancient Vedic texts to the recent Philosophers like Daya Krishnan. The book sets the *Pūrṇavāda* Philosophy in the contemporary context and puts forth its relevance.

4. **Dr. Uday Kumthekar, Dr. T. P. Deshpande: Why *Pūrṇavāda*? –** The thought of *Pūrṇavāda* is much based on *Vedas*, its relevance in today's era has been established in this book. The detailed study on *Pūrṇavāda* and verses used in it has been discussed thoroughly in the given book.

5. **Prof. A. D. Sharma: *Pūrṇavāda Mahotsav – Darshan ka Jivan aur Jivan ka Darshan*** – This is an article published in a book by an eminent professor of Philosophy that talks about the yearly festival at parner and along with that the uniqueness of the philosophy in the contemporary thoughts.

6. **Prof. S. Pannerselvam: Poornawad: Philosophy of Common Man** – The article talks about the *Pūrṇavāda* as a Philosophy of practical approach and its contemporary importance and applicability in the life of a Human Being.

Need of the Present Study: -

The topic which has been undertaken in this study has not yet been explored in academics nor at the research level. Contemporary schools of thought like *Pūrṇavāda* need to be studied in academia and that is why the topic is chosen for the study. Introduction and contemplation over thoughts of *Pūrṇavāda* in the contemporary philosophical world will also be achieved through this study. The present research is undertaken for establishing *Pūrṇavāda* philosophy as an independent school of thought.

Hypothesis: -

The hypothesis for the study is as follows,

1. *Pūrṇavāda* presents the traditional *Vedānta* views only in the new language.
2. *Pūrṇavāda* has assimilated all the existing *Vedāntic* Philosophical systems and produced a new Philosophical thought.
3. *Pūrṇavāda* is altogether a new *Vedānta* Philosophical system.

Objectives: -

The chief objectives for the present research about the study of *Pūrṇavāda* philosophy as a new *Vedanta* school, are as follows,

1. To analyze the concepts of *Pūrṇavāda* philosophy as a contemporary new *Vedāntic* school of thought.
2. To compare and analyze *Pūrṇavāda* philosophy with Indian *Vedāntic* schools.
3. To find out the position of *Pūrṇavāda* philosophy concerning other Indian schools of thought.
4. To acknowledge Dr. R. P. Parnerkar's Philosophical and Social contribution.

Scope and Limitations: -

Scope: The study will be focused on specific concepts of *Pūrṇavāda* Philosophy like *Jīva, Jagat, Iśvara, Mokṣa,* and *Pramāṇa* referring to other *Vedāntaic* schools of thought in Indian Philosophy. The research will also cover the application part of the *Pūrṇavāda* Philosophy as Values of Life. Direct comparison with other orthodox schools will also be carried out during the research.

Limitation: The study will be limited to the direct analysis of *Vedāntaic* schools of thought along with *Pūrṇavāda* and Dr. R. P. Parnerkar's literature. The western philosophical perspective would not be considered for the study. The heterodox schools' standpoint would not be taken into account for the study specific.

Methodology: -

The present research is of a Qualitative type, the available content will be utilized for the analysis, and through this method, the research work will be carried out. According to the need of the project, the comparative analysis method will also be used. The content analysis will be the method used by the researcher considering the available data as a basis for analysis.

Work Plan: -

The researcher has first favored separating his study into the following sections as one of the recognized measurements of the doctoral research design:

Chapter I: Introduction

This chapter will set the background for the study along with the detailed introduction of the Author of the *Pūrṇavāda* i.e., Dr. R. P. Parnerkar. The chapter will cover an introduction to Dr. R. P. Parnerkar's personal life, his philosophical, spiritual, and social contribution, and his achievements in the same along with that there will be a detailed introduction to the *Vedānta* schools of thought.

Chapter II: The concept of *Pramāṇa* and *Jagat*:

This chapter will try to find out the perspective of *Pūrṇavāda* and other *Vedānta* schools of thought on questions like what is *Prama*, what is *Pramāṇa*, etc. An analytical study of the concept of *Jagat* and questions regarding its reality and mode of perception in the light of different *Vedānta* schools of thought and *Pūrṇavāda* will be carried out in this chapter.

Chapter III: The concept of *Jīva*, *Iśvara*, and *Mokṣa*:

The detailed concept of *Jīva*, *Iśvara,* and *Mokṣa* will be discussed in this chapter along with its references to the *Vedāntaic* schools of thought. The concept of *Iśvara* is one of the prominent concepts in Indian Philosophy and *Pūrṇavāda* as well. Establishing its interrelation or difference from one another according to the *Pūrṇavāda* and other *Vedāntaic* schools will be analyzed.

Chapter IV: The concept of Values of Life:

The concerned chapter will be covering the very important tenet of *Pūrṇavāda* philosophy which is its applicability in Life. The values of Life and the application of *Pūrṇavāda* Philosophy will be studied in detail.

Chapter V: The *Pūrṇavāda* and other *Astika* Darshan:

The chapter is dedicated to a direct comparison of *Pūrṇavāda* Philosophy and the *Astika* school of thought. The *Astika* school of thought in Indian Philosophy and The *Pūrṇavāda* Philosophy will be compared and analyzed, and at the same time, the relation and uniqueness of the *Pūrṇavāda* philosophy will be verified.

Chapter VI: *Pūrṇavāda* as an independent *Vedānta* School:

The present chapter will deal with analyzing the core factors of *Pūrṇavāda* philosophy with other *Vedānta* schools, to verify if it is a thought which can be categorized under the same tradition. The similarity and differences both will be analyzed and discussed in length in this specific chapter.

Chapter VII: Conclusion:

This would be the last chapter of the research work titled 'Conclusion'. This will include a certain analysis, summary, and output of the research undertaken. The chapter will also mention the verifiability of the hypothesis taken for the research work.

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